10: d'Orleans--301 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 644, 701, 177.70

"The Laos army is kept up at a very slight cost, there being only, apart from the Siam troops, a royal corps, dressed in European style and armed with rapid-firing rifles. The rest of the men are supplied in the event of war, by the villages with their own form of weapon, and they are not likely to be dangerous opponents for a long time to come, as shown by the way in which they fled before the soldiers of Deo Van Tri."

69: Lewis T-5 (1950) 1951 AM1 Indochina
Laotians AM8

489 It was fitting that at Luang Prabang the impetus of travel should
509 have spent itself. Not even convoys ever came as far as this. Groups of unfortunate men occasionally set off on foot and walked for as long as three weeks through jungle trails to relieve isolated posts. Other arrivals and departures were by a weekly D.C.3 plying between Luang Prabang and Vientiane. It was booked up well ahead.

505 Down at the riverside the story was much the same as at Vientiane. There were pirogues which supposedly made regular journeys, but no one was prepared to commit himself to positive information about them. One authority went so far as to say that it was out of the question to hope to travel north by pirogue because the river was too low at this time of the year. I had just thanked him when the engine of what looked like a totally abandoned hulk, lying in an oily pool not far away, suddenly burst into wheezy activity. One of the crew of two said that they would be leaving in half an hour. Bound for where? — Vientiane? No . . . Xieng
● 701 Khong — for the unnavigable north, of course. All the space had been reserved for a body of ex-pirates who had changed sides and had now, it was said, demanded to be sent back to fight their former allies.

While I was slowly piecing together this jig-saw of information in pidgin-French, the brand-new patriots arrived for embarkation; a most apathetic looking body of men. In their ill-fitting uniforms they were standardized; deprived of individuality by a common factor of misery, an ingrained habit of expressionless stoicism. Silently they filed up the gang-plank and filled the dim interior of the pirogue. It was difficult to believe that the fire of conviction burned in any of these breasts, and I felt sorry for the French N.C.O. who was being sent back in charge.

000 But Monsieur Leveau said that there would also be a pirogue going south one day, and to save me from being victimized by Chinese cat-and-mouse tactics he sent for the owner and asked him when the boat would leave. With gentle satisfaction the Chinese

facing: COCHIN-CHINA: THE SEARCH FOR SMALL FISH

Military organization. As a wise sovereign who was the friend of peace but knew how to prepare for war, Sam-Sène-Thaï profited by the census in order to reorganize his kingdom's army. He raised its strength to 150,000 men, whom he divided into three distinct groups: the first to form an interior police force, the second to be specially drilled in defending the country from foreign attack and the third as a reserve force. The total army was divided into five corps with 30,000 fighting men each, plus 20,000 coolies responsible for provisioning the army. The warriors fought on horseback or on elephants and had lances and swords for weapons. They also had a few flintlock rifles which were originally imported from China and which the Laotians were already learning how to make themselves. 701 175* 643* /659/

This large military force made no small contribution /57/ to the tranquillity of Lan-Xang. Sam-Sène-Thaï also seems to have been a clever politician. Already allied to Siam by his marriage, he strengthened his neighborly relations with Lan-Na by taking Nang-One-Sa, a daughter of the king of Xieng-Mai, for his second wife. Moreover, the fall of the Mongol dynasty and the accession of the Ming to the throne were of no small importance to him, if we are to believe H. Maspero who relates that he received Chinese titles in 1404 (1). After the epic of Fa-Ngoun this was a happy 701 643* 648* 175*

1. According to H. Maspero, Bulletin de l'E. F.E.O., Vol. XVIII, No. 3. Cf. R. Grousset, op. cit. /Histoire de l'Extrême-Orient/, p. 612, note 4.

stage of calm in the enjoyment of the fruits of the preceding reign, and when he died in 1416 he handed down to his successor a prosperous kingdom which was solidly based and living in peace, and all the while dreaded by its neighbors.

LAN-KHAM-DÈNG (1375), KING 1416-1428.

When the king died he left a numerous progeny, six sons and five daughters whom Nang-Keo-Yopha and Nang-One-Sa had given him. We do not know the reason why it was not the eldest Mun-Ban, but the second son Lane-Kham-Dèng who succeeded his father. The second son /58/ mounted the throne at a time when Tran-Ninh had fallen prey to dynastic disorders, he welcomed the queen Nang-Phom-Dam and her son Kham-Phong when they were 643* 648* 175*

633 be seen from a great distance. To be sure, it extends over a prodigi-
174 ous area and is so large that one would take it for a city... The king's
344 apartments, which are embellished with a superb and magnificent portico and a large number of beautiful rooms accompanied by a large parlor, are all made of wood which will not decay and ornamented inside and outside with excellent bas-reliefs so delicately gilded that they seem rather to be covered with flakes of gold than gold leaf.

"From that point one enters the courtyards which are extremely spacious, and one first sees a long line of houses built entirely of brick and roofed /113/ with tile in which the second wives usually stay, and outside another row of houses built alongside in the same symmetry for the mandarins' officers. I could write a whole volume if I undertook a minute description of all the other parts of the palace, the riches, the departments, the gardens and a number of other such things...

565 "The houses of the principal lords and of well-to-do persons are
342 very high and beautiful, and are all made of wood with a great deal
352 of artifice and a greater or lesser number of ornaments, depending on the expense to which the individuals are willing to go, but I must confess that the common people and the poor are housed extremely badly
/793/ and that their dwellings are cabins and huts rather than houses. Only the talapoins (bonzes), who are the priests of the idols, have permission to build their monasteries and houses out of brick and stone. Instead of rugs and other such furnishings, persons of quality use small reed mats in which the weave is so delicate and so highly ornamented with figures and various leaf patterns that, to my mind, there is nothing more beautiful nor more pleasing to the eye. They ordinarily use them to cover the walls of /114/ their rooms and houses inside and outside, which they keep very clean and of which they take particular care...

643* "The king is absolute and independent... all the land belongs to
/423/ him, and he disposes as absolute lord of all that his subjects possess...
631 offices, employment, honors and wealth depend absolutely on the
174 king, who raises those persons who please him most to the highest offices in the kingdom... . The principal dignities and offices of the kingdom are eight in number. The first is that of viceroy general... and because the kingdom is divided into seven provinces seven other viceroys are appointed... there are also other governments of less consequence which depend on the former both in respect to civil affairs and to those which concern war... . Each of these provinces has
/701/ its militia, which consists of infantry and cavalry.

mandarin and head of the tribunal; 3) the Phaya Muong- 647
Khang or first mandarin of the center and head of the Serv- 642
ice of public works, transports, etc. 631

The Senam was composed of the Phaya Muong-Khoua or /646/
second right-hand mandarin, and of four councillors under the direction of the Phya Muong-Sen.

The judges or Kromakanes, who were under the Phaya /693/
Muong-Sen and the Phaya Muong-Tiane, numbered seven in all and included the Phaya Muong-Sai or second left-hand mandarin.

Last came the mandarins responsible for the collection of /653
taxes, the assembling of labor drafts and the transport of 644/
bamboo, rattan, thatch and pirogues for the king's service and the public services; then the pages and chamberlains or mahaleks, the military leaders, the functionaries responsible for petty tasks inside the palace, the treasurers, storekeepers, etc.

The reader will note the insignificant position reserved /701/
for the military mandarins in this hierarchy. Of Sam-Sene-Thai's powerful army (see above, p. 56), nothing at all remained.

provinces were aided by an Oupahat, a Ratsavong and a Ratsabout who, like the court dignitaries, gave their orders to the tassengs or canton heads who had authority over the village leaders (naibans). By establishing the different government commissions in Laos Pavie therefore strengthened the native authorities in their age-old prerogatives and the princes of Luang-Prabang in /325/ their dynastic rights and privileges. In order to mark their absolute attachment to France and to give more force to their vehement protests against awarding Siam the part of the kingdom situated on the right bank, the latter insisted on receiving, in solemn fashion and as soon as possible, the investiture of the government of the Republic from the commissioner general. After his return from Muong-Sing eight 643*
months later, Pavie drew up on parchment in Hanoi the titles of the old king Oun-Kham, of King Zakarine, of his brother and of the Oupahat Boun-Khong, and on April 19, 1895 proceeded to this important ceremony.

"All those who had a part in the control of affairs," he wrote as he finished the account of his mission, "were present. The entire populace was invited. In the name of the government of the

rocks which tower precipitously over its course, the Sé-Kémane widens out as it is joined by the Dak-Bla, the sources of which, like those of its chief tributary the Sé-Souk, are near the Sésane. The Sé-Kémane is hardly navigable for pirogues except from Muong-Kao on. The latter is the most important center in the region and is generally known by the name of Attopeu. Pirogues can ply back and forth between this point and Stung-Treng in all seasons, but the many rapids with which the Sékhong is encumbered, mainly as far as the Sé-Pien, make its course extremely torrential and navigation very difficult. Before it reaches Siempang the Sékhong is joined on its right bank by the Sé-Pien which, like its [102] tributary the Sé-Kampho, comes from the plateau of the Bolovens. When they leave their gorges these two rivers water marvelous plains which are slightly hilly towards the north and which could serve as pasture land for immense flocks. From Siempang on the Sékhong can be navigated by steam launches during the high water period.

Before it reaches the Mékong the Sékhong is joined, less than ten kilometers from its mouth, by its chief tributary the Sésane, which with its 400-kilometer course is of no less importance and interest than the Sékhong itself.

The Sésane comes from a mountain mass which dominates the amphitheater of Cong-Bol just above the 15th parallel. Its deep valley is called Poco by the natives. Like all the upper valleys of the watercourses in this region, it is encumbered with rapids and waterfalls and deeply cut between rock walls. On its left bank the Poco is joined by the Bla, the valley of which is followed for some distance by the road joining Attopeu to Qui-Nhon by way of Kon-Toum. The Sésane then traverses all this gold-bearing region which is still little-known and, so to speak, unexploited to this day. In its valley are found the mining posts of Ban-Phi, Ruhleville and Bokham. It can be navigated by pirogue in all seasons from Kong-Sédam on. The latter point, slightly above Ban-Phi, has a militia post stationed there to provide security for the works of the Attopeu Gold Mining Company [compagnie des Mines d'or d'Attopeu].

Some twenty-five kilometers from its mouth the Sésane is joined by the Ton-Lé-Srépok, a large tributary. This river, also known as the Sé-Bang-Khan, comes from the south, not far from the plateau of Lang-Bian. It passes close by Darlac, the capital of the province of the same name, and through Ban-Don, from which point it is

Tribal Tai

291 the Deng-Thais, is applied to the edges of the gown. It is further
563 ornamented [233] on the outside edge opposite the buttonholes with colored silk embroidery which does not go down below the waist.

This garment is also folded in half lengthwise and worn rolled around the body with the sleeves left hanging.

302 The women wear their hair parted down the middle in front
301 and rolled into a sort of long tassel behind which is contained within the folds of a little turban. The latter is wound above the forehead and the free end inserted under the first turn, on the nape of the neck. This headdress is quite similar to that of the Annamite women in Tonkin.

In certain regions of Laos, Thai women wind their hair into a sort of coil which girls wear loosely down their neck and betrothed or married women wear on top of the head. Thai jewelry is made of heavy silver and is of the same type as Laotian jewelry. The men wear bracelets on their wrists.

262 Food. The Thai diet is like that of the Laotians, but they prefer
264 non-glutinous white rice and use chopsticks like the Chinese and Annamites.

The use of betel is quite widespread among the Thais, but in
276 contrast to the Laotians they keep their teeth white. The Thais smoke the oily, opiated tobacco of Tonkin and China in bamboo waterpipes whose tiny bowls only contain a small pinch of tobacco. They also smoke a local variety of tobacco, either in cigarettes or in pipes with a highly worked clay bowl into which a long stem ending in a glass or jade mouthpiece is inserted.

156 Character. Although serious and reflective, the Thais have a vivacious and friendly character. They are somewhat cold in appearance, but are sound friends and highly affable when one gets to know them better.

• [701] Gentler and more timid than the Laotians, they have no taste for the art of war and it is difficult to get them to stay in the native militia.

433 They are very self-seeking and much more miserly than the Lao-
438 tians. [234] It should be noted, moreover, that since they produce everything themselves and are a people of farmers and livestock
156 breeders, they do not have, by virtue of their ever sedentary occupations, the opportunities which these latter have to enjoy fairly high profits resulting from commercial transactions, nor the special habits which contact with different races gives.

181 The Thais love pleasure and celebrations. Guaranteed their daily
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have any elected councils or parliamentary representation. Today it constitutes one of the five states in the Indo-Chinese union.

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A consequence of the unification of Laos was its division into provinces and the incorporation of its officials, who had heretofore been a staff apart, in the ranks of the Indo-China Civil Service.

The government commissioners have therefore become civil service administrators.

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Today each of the fourteen provinces of Laos is placed under the authority of an Administrator, and the latter is seconded by a civil service clerk.

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Native guard. In Laos there are no detachments of the troops stationed in Indo-China, but only a native civil guard [278] composed partly of Annamites and partly of Laotians. It constitutes a police force which is distributed in detachments of varying size under the command of inspectors and chief guardsmen. It is entirely at the disposition of the administrators who are heads of provinces. This native guard numbers twenty-seven inspectors and chief guardsmen and 850 men, of which 320 are volunteer Annamite enlisted men recruited in Annam and Tonkin, and 530 are natives recruited from all the races of Laos. It may be called on to lend its support, if the need arise, to the native authorities who are responsible for maintaining order and security in their respective territories. Peace and order are so perfect in Laos, however, that one can go about freely without an escort.

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The treasury service. The treasury service in Laos is headed by a bursar who holds the title of "Chief Bursar of the Treasury Service in Laos." He handles all matters dealing with receipts, expenditures and treasury operations in Laos in the same forms and according to the same rules as the other bursars who are heads of services in Indo-China.

He is assisted by a deputy bursar.

These two agents reside in Vien-Tiane.

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Medical service. This service includes three colonial physicians on detachment in Laos who are in charge of the infirmaries at Luang-Prabang, Vien-Tiane (formerly at Pak-Hin-Boun) and Khong. They care for all sick persons, whether European or native, as has been noted above (1).

(1) See Chapter III, Health Service.

693 Judges, or "Kromakanes" in Laotian, are responsible to the Phaya-Muong-Sen and the Phaya-Muong-Tiane, and are the:

Phaya-Muong-Sai, second mandarin of the left.
Phya-Sieng-Tai.
Phya-Muong-Pak.
Phya-Sak-Kha.
Phya-Muong-Khouk (particularly responsible for supervision of prisons).
Phya-Phane-Nong.
Mune-Vi-Sai.

647 651 [492] The mandarins responsible for the collection of taxes, the assemblage of statute laborers, and the transport of bamboo, rattan, thatch straw and pirogues for the king's service and the public service are the:

Phaya-Soune, mandarin of the middle.
Pha-Jotha.
Sanone.
Si-Phat-Thamane.
Si-Samoute.
Si-Sounone.
Sene-Tiane.
} Under the orders of the Phaya-Muong-Khang and the Phaya-Soune.

The pages of the king bear the honorary title of "Mahatlek." They are the:

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1. Phaya-Nak-Phoumine
   Phaya-Kham-Soune-Phou
   } Chief pages and chamberlains.
2. Phya-Na-Heua.
   Phya-Mune-Na.
   Phya-Natai.
   Phya-Muong-Phene.
   } Principal pages attached to the king's person, who bear his arms and insignia in ceremonies.
3. Phout-Thavong-Mahakhote
   Mune-Vong-Sai.
   Akhasa.
   } Chamber pages, guardians of the king's property, of his parasol, etc.

701 The military leaders are the:

Phaya-Soupho.
Phaya-Kham-Mone.
Phya-Vieng-Ke.
Phya-Vieng-Khame.
Oupasa.
Mune-Sanone-Tiai.
} Responsible for various military duties.

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Tax on rice, paddy, horns, hides, etc.

	Per picul (francs)	Per hundred kilograms (francs)
Paddy	0.25	0.416
Rice	0.50	0.832
Gum lac	2.50	4.16
Chinese nettle	2.50	4.16
Buffalo horns and hides	2.50	4.16
Buck horns and hides	3.75	6.25
Anteater scales	3.75	6.25
Cardamom	5.00	8.32
Elephant and tiger bones	3.75	6.25
Benzoin	12.50	20.82
Rubber	12.50	20.82
Wax	12.50	20.82
Ivory	50.00	83.20
Pirogues	ten percent ad valorem.	

Also to be added are certain incidental receipts, such as those arising from chancery fees or those collected by the native tribunals in conformity with the rates scheduled by the code of Vien-Tiane.

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The royal treasury of Luang-Prabang subsidizes certain expenses, such as the upkeep of the kingdom's militia, of the native hospital in Luang-Prabang, of the Franco-Laotian school in Luang-Prabang, etc. [504]

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Finally, the general budget of Indo-China pays out a variable sum annually for the purpose of balancing the receipts and expenditures of Laos.

C. Opium

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One of the most important sources of Laotian revenue is provided by the sale of opium. The administration is responsible for the sale of this substance, which it manufactures itself and which is marketed by licensed merchants acting as middlemen.

Before 1900, Laos sold on its own behalf the opium which was allotted to it by the Cochinchina Customs and Excise Office (1).

(1) This was true only for Lower Laos. The opium sold in Upper Laos came from the Luang-Prabang distillery, which is no longer in operation today.

149: Reinach--384a G-3 (no date) 1901 AMI Indochina
Laotians AM8

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Fig. 120 /p. 507/ Militiamen at Muong-Son. (Courtesy of M. Besson